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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR DS/IP/RD/SCA, DS/DSS/ITA, CA, AND SCA/INS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/09/2019

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: EMBASSY COLOMBO EAC MEETING JANUARY 8, 2009

REF: STATE 01636

Classified By: Michael V. Perkins, Regional Security Officer,
reasons 1.4 (b, d)

¶1. (C) Summary: AmEmbassy Colombo convened an Emergency Action Committee (EAC) meeting on January 8, 2009. The EAC discussed post's security posture in light of the recent attacks by Israel in Gaza and the possible U.S. veto of a one sided, Libyan-proposed resolution to the United Nations Security Council on the current situation in Gaza. The EAC also discussed the possible backlash here in Sri Lanka from the possible veto of this resolution and the threat if any to the USG personnel and facilities here at post. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) On January 8, 2009, AmEmbassy Colombo convened an meeting of the core EAC. Present for the meeting were the Ambassador, Regional Security Officer, Regional Affairs Officer, Political Officer, Economic Officer, Consular Officer, Public Affairs Officer, Defense Attach and the Assistant Regional Security Officer. The EAC discussed the security profile for the official and expatriate American community, as well as security of "soft" targets, in light of the information provided reftel.

¶3. (C) RSO advised the EAC that he had recently met with a senior Sri Lanka Police Service (SLPS) commander, who happened to be Muslim. The RSO and the police commander had discussed the crisis in the Middle East and possible threats, if any, to Americans in Sri Lanka. The police official noted that imams (at least in his mosque) have not expressed any anti-American sentiment or called for protests against the USG. He averred that he had not heard of imams at other mosques fomenting anti-American feelings, either. He assured the RSO that there was no threat to Americans or American interests from the small Muslim community in Sri Lanka. The RSO further informed the EAC that he had met in recent days with the Inspector General of Police and commanders of the Criminal Investigative Division, the Special Task Force and the SLPS Western Province Intelligence Directorate. All of these officers assured the RSO that there are no radical Islamic elements operating within Sri Lanka and that there is no threat to Americans or American interests from Muslims in Sri Lanka. Moreover, the Embassy and American Center are located with a GoSL designated High Security Zone (HSZ), within which protests or demonstrations are prohibited. Even if there are demonstrations against the USG, the police would not allow protestors to get any closer than a few blocks from USG facilities. The RSO's assessment, with which other EAC members concurred, was that the conflict in the Middle East did not warrant a change in post's security posture. The threat to both the official and expatriate American communities remains the possibility of injury if caught in proximity to an attack on a Sri Lankan political, economic or security forces target. That is, the threat remains being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

¶4. (SBU) Regarding soft targets, the EAC took note of the

fact that many soft targets - hotels, restaurants, churches, etc. - that American citizens may frequent are within GoSL designated High Security Zones, in which pedestrians and vehicles are subject to search. The EAC concluded, therefore, that security for soft targets was commensurate with the actual threat. The EAC concurred that it was not necessary at this time to revise post's Warden message, concluding that the message provides current information and defensive measures commensurate to the threat.

15. (U) Post will continue to monitor the security environment and plans to safeguard these events. Post will report further developments, if any, per septel. POC for this message is RSO Michael V. Perkins, who may be contacted at 94.11.249.8885, 94.11.249.8888 (MSG Post 1 after regular business hours), or via the classified and unclassified email systems.
Blake